

REMARKS

By way of the foregoing claim amendments, minor changes have been incorporated into the claims to delete the reference numerals and the multiple dependency, and to avoid the European style of claim language involving the use of the phrase "characterized in that". New Claims 15-20 are also presented for consideration.

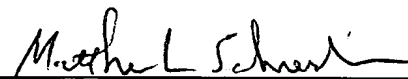
Early and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: January 30, 2004

By: 
Matthew L. Schneider
Registration No. 32,814

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620